



RETIREMENT SERVICES DIVISION MEMORANDUM 2020-02

March 24, 2020

ATTENTION: State Agency Retirement Subject Matter Experts

SUBJECT: TEMPORARY ACCEPTANCE OF ELECTRONIC COPIES OF
RETIREMENT APPLICATIONS AND RELATED FORMS

I. INTRODUCTION

The circumstances created by the novel coronavirus will challenge the ability of the Retirement Services Division (RSD) to process the large number of retirements we anticipate for April 1 and May 1, 2020. Among other difficulties, our offices are currently closed to visitors, most of our staff is working from remote locations, and we must take measures to limit the risk of contagion associated with the exchange of paper documents and other materials.

To meet the retirement needs of our members under these conditions, RSD is implementing the following temporary procedures for the submission of retirement applications while the Governor's work from home directive remains in force:

- All retirement packages must now be scanned by the applicant's agency and emailed to the RSD. The original documents must still be transmitted to the RSD by mail or dropped off by courier. Scanned documents must be received by RSD no later than close of business on the last business day before the member's retirement date.
- Each applicant for retirement must provide his or her agency with a home email address or, if none is available, a telephone number.
- At the end of each month, the agency shall also provide the RSD with a summary of that month's retirement applications, identifying each retiree and confirming the status of each application. Instructions and information that must be in this email are detailed below.
- The RSD will temporarily allow agencies to submit pdf or fax copies of a member's signature (or, where required, the signature of a member's spouse) on retirement documents. If the member is unable to provide the agency with an original signature, the member may submit the signature by fax or email. If the member is unable to use fax or email, then the agency must confirm the details of the member's application by other means. **Please note, however, that the requirement that certain signatures be *notarized***

has not changed. For documents that must be notarized, the RSD will temporarily allow agencies to submit pdf or fax copies of *notarized* signatures.

Each of these new procedures is explained below.

1. Scanning and Emailing Retirement Documents:

As has always been the case, it is important that all retirement-related paperwork (including applications, related forms, and required documents) be physically submitted to the Office of the State Comptroller as quickly and completely as possible. Now, to ensure that all applications are received and properly processed, we ask that you take an additional step: **Please *also* scan the entire retirement package and e-mail it to:**

- OSC.Retirementaudit@ct.gov
 - with copies to:
 - Paul.Piechowicz@ct.gov
- and-
- Donald.Wilkerson@ct.gov.

Among other records, the following documents must be scanned and e-mailed to the above addresses, and the originals transmitted to the RSD by mail or courier: CO-898, CO-1047, applicable option forms (CO-899, CO-900, CO-901, or CO-902), the Marital Certification Form (spouse waiver), and all necessary Birth Certificates. The RSD will accept electronic copies of these documents, so long as they are submitted to the email addresses listed above no later than close of business on the last business day before the member's retirement date.

By e-mailing the retirement package and other essential records, you will guarantee that the applications reach our office, and you will give the RSD team adequate time to review the paperwork and inform you of any potential problems in a timely fashion.

For these reasons, the RSD must receive electronic copies of retirement applications by the last business day of the month that precedes the employee's retirement date. Otherwise, there is a chance that the employee's requested retirement date will not be honored.

Please note, however, that the original documents must also be submitted. If a retirement is processed on the basis of documents that have been submitted electronically, and if the original documents are not received within 30 days after the Governor's work-from-home directive has been lifted, the employee's retirement payments will be suspended, and will not recommence unless or until such time as the employee submits the original documents.

Please note, as well, that one important aspect of our procedures has not changed: Each employee's eligibility should be confirmed before the retirement date that is reflected on the CO-898. If the employee is not eligible to retire, it is the agency's responsibility to inform the employee and explain the requirements that remain to be satisfied. (The RSD's Audit Unit will

provide the agency with all necessary information via e-mail.) The agency is responsible for resolving any issues directly with the employee and then submitting a new retirement package for the revised retirement date. Any questions the employee may have should be submitted to the agency, and the agency is expected to work with the Audit Unit until a resolution is reached.

2. Monthly Summaries:

On the last business day of each month, the agency should provide the RSD with a summary of the month's retirements. The summary should include:

- the name of each employee who has applied for retirement that month;
- the employee's proposed retirement date;
- the employee's survivor option election and birthdate of survivor;
- the employee's contact information, including email and/or home telephone number; and
- a list of any forms or signatures relating to the employee's application which have *not yet been submitted*.

3. New Signature Procedures:

The requirement that certain retirement documents must be signed by the member and/or the member's spouse will not change. However, as a temporary measure, the RSD will begin processing retirement applications on the basis of electronic signatures.

Whenever possible, an applicant for retirement should sign the relevant documents and either (a) scan the signed documents and transmit them to the agency via email or (b) transmit the signed documents to the agency by fax. The agency will then (a) scan the faxed documents and email them to the RSD or forward documents transmitted by email and (b) send an additional copy of the faxed documents to the RSD by mail.

If, for some reason, the member is unable to fax or scan a given document to the agency, then the member should be asked to confirm the details of his or her application to his or her agency in an email. The email should be from the member's State of Connecticut email account, and it must contain:

- the member's name, address, birth date, and employee number;
- the member's requested retirement date;
- the retirement option the member has selected; and
- the birth date of the member's spouse or contingent annuitant, if any.

The member's email should be included among the application materials that are transmitted by the agency to the RSD.

Our office will place the member on the payroll on a temporary basis, but we will suspend payments in the future, unless original forms are received and verified no more than 30 days after the Governor's work-from-home order expires.

In some cases (*e.g.* the Marital Certification Form), the law requires that a document must be notarized before the RSD may act on it. **The procedures described above do not change that requirement.** Where a notarized signature is required, therefore, the above procedures require that the agency provide the RSD with a copy of the document, *as notarized*.

Governor Lamont's Executive Order No. 7K, issued on March 23, 2020, creates procedures by which notaries and commissioners of the Superior Court may notarize documents from remote locations. State employees should avail themselves of those procedures wherever possible.

II. CONCLUSION

Thank you for your co-operation in these difficult times.

If you have any questions concerning these new measures, or if there are special circumstances under which your agency cannot comply with them, please contact Donald Wilkerson, at (860) 702-3642, or at Donald.Wilkerson@ct.gov.

Very truly yours,

BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John W. Herrington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John W. Herrington, Director
Retirement Services Division